

THE JEDI ASHTAVAKRA GITA

The Ashtavakra Gita is an ancient Hindu text structured in the form of a dialogue between the sage Ashtavakra and his pupil Janaka – the king of Mithila, a region of North Eastern India. The dating of the text is near-impossible with a potential age range as wide as 700 to 2500 years from present.

In any case, it is packed full of wisdom and crying out for a revised 'Jedi' treatment. As is our way, where traditional translations might use names such as Brahman or Atman, or capital 'S' Self – we use 'The Force'. Where reference is made to a sage or 'wise person', we use the name 'Jedi'. This is not meant to cause offence in any way. The use of different names by different cultures when referencing 'The Absolute' can trick us into thinking that fundamentally different concepts are being discussed, when nothing could be further from the truth. The Absolute is The Absolute irrespective of what name you give it. Within the mythology of The Star Wars Universe 'The Force' is the 'Absolute Ground of Being' and those in closest communion with it are 'Jedi'.

This version is adapted from the version constructed by Bart Marshall.

With that I give you The Jedi Ashtavakra Gita.
May The Force be with You Always

1: Instruction on Realisation of The Force

In which King Janaka asks the Jedi Ashtavakra how he can attain Knowledge, detachment, and liberation. Ashtavakra tells him.

Janaka asked:

Master, how is Knowledge to be achieved, detachment acquired, and liberation attained?

Ashtavakra answered:

To be free, shun the temptations of the senses like poison. Turn your attention to forgiveness, sincerity, kindness, simplicity, and truth.

You are not earth, water, fire or air. Nor are you empty space. Liberation is to know yourself as Awareness in The Force alone – the Witness to the contents of consciousness.

Abide in Awareness of The Force with no illusion of personality. You will feel instantly free and at peace.

You have no caste or duties. You are invisible, unattached, formless. You are the Witness of all things. So - be content.

Right and wrong, pleasure and pain, exist only as contents of the mind. They are not your concern. You neither struggle, nor revel. You are free.

You are the Solitary Witness of All That Is In The Force, forever free.
Your only bondage is not seeing This fact to be true.

The thought: "I am the doer" is the bite of a poisonous snake.
To know: "I do nothing" is the wisdom of faith in The Force.
Be content.

A single understanding: "I am One Awareness in The Force," consumes all suffering in the fire of an instant. Be content.

You are unbounded Awareness — Bliss, Supreme Bliss--
in which the universe appears like the mirage of a snake in a rope.
Be content.

It is true what they say: "You are what you think."
If you think you are bound, you are bound.
If you think you are free, you are free.

You are The Force — the Witness of its manifestation.
You are perfect, all-pervading, One.
You are free, desireless, forever still.
The universe is but a thought in You.

Meditate on this: "I am Awareness in The Force --Unity itself."
Give up the idea that you are separate, a person,
that there is a difference between within and without.

You have long been bound thinking: "I am a person."
Let the knowledge: "I am Awareness in The Force" be the sword that frees you.

You are now and forever free, luminous, transparent, still.
Expending much effort on stilling the mind keeps one in bondage.

You are pure Consciousness in The Force — the true substance of the universe.
The universe exists within you.
Don't be small-minded.

You are unconditioned, changeless, formless.
You are solid, unfathomable, cool.
Desire nothing. For you are Consciousness in The Force.

That which has form is not real.
Only the formless is permanent.

Once this is known, you will not return to illusion.

Just as a mirror exists both within and without the image reflected,
The Force exists both within and without the body.

Just as the same space exists both within and without a jar,
the timeless, all-pervasive Force exists across and beyond the totality of things.

2: The Joy of Force-Realisation

*It works! Upon hearing Ashtavakra's words Janaka realizes his
True Nature. Enraptured, he describes the joy and wonder of his new state.*

Janaka said:

I am now cleansed and at peace--
Awareness beyond Consciousness.
All this time, I have been duped by illusion.

By the light of The Force alone, the body and the universe appear.
I am Everything and Nothing.

Seeing there is no universe or body, by grace The Force is revealed.

As waves, foam and bubbles are not different from water,
so the universe manifesting from The Force, is not different from The Force.

Look closely at cloth, you see only threads.
Look closely at creation, you see only The Force.

As sweetness pervades sugarcane juice,
I am the awareness of creation.

Not seeing The Force, the world is materialized.
Seeing The Force, the world vanishes.
A rope is not a snake but can appear to be.

I am not other than Light in The Force.
The universe manifests at my glance.

The mirage of universe appears in me as silver appears in mother-of-pearl,
as a snake appears in a rope, as water appears on a desert horizon.

As a pot returns to clay, a wave to water,
a bracelet to gold, so will the universe return to The Force.

I am wonderful indeed-- beyond adoration.

I cannot decay nor ever die,
though the gods and all the Universe should perish to the last blade of grass.

I am wonderful indeed-- beyond adoration.
Even with a body I am One.
I neither come nor go.
I am everywhere at once.

I am wonderful indeed-- beyond adoration.
I am astounded at my powers.
The universe appears within me but I do not touch it.

I am wonderful indeed-- beyond adoration.
I am everything thought or spoken, and yet have nothing.

In reality, knowledge, the knower, and the knowable do not exist separately.
I am the transparent Force in which through ignorance they appear distinct.

Looking at One and seeing many is the cause of all misery.
The only cure is to realize what is seen is not there.
I am One— aware, blissful, immaculate.

I am unbounded Awareness.
Only in imagination do I have limits.
Reflecting on this, I abide in The Force.

I am neither free nor bound. The illusion of such things has fallen away.
Though I contain creation, I have no substance.

Having seen for certain that this universe and body is without form or substance,
I am revealed as Awareness in The Force. Imagination has no place here.

The body exists only in imagination, as do heaven and hell, bondage, freedom, fear.
Are these my concern? Me, who is pure Awareness in The Force?

I see no differences or separation. Even the multitudes appear as a single formless
desert.
To what should I cling?

I am not the body. I do not have a body.
I am Awareness in The Force, not a person.
My thirst for life bound me to a conception of life.

In the limitless ocean of The Force the winds of the mind
roil the myriad waves of the world.

But when the wind subsides in the limitless ocean
the ark of personhood is swallowed up, along with the universe it carries.

And how wonderful it is!

In the limitless ocean of The Force, waves of beings arise, collide, play for a time,
then disappear--as is their nature.

3: The Test of Force Realisation

*In which Ashtavakra is delighted for Janaka but sees inconsistencies. He
fires off a series of confrontational verses about attachment to worldly pleasure.*

Ashtavakra said:

Having realized yourself as One with The Force,
being serene and indestructible, why do you desire wealth?

Just as imagining silver in mother-of-pearl, causes greed to arise,
so does ignorance of The Force cause desire for illusion.

Having realized yourself as That in which the waves of the world rise and fall,
why do you run around in turmoil?

Having realized yourself as pure Awareness in The Force, as beautiful beyond
description, how can you remain a slave to lust?

It is strange that in a Jedi who has realized 'The Force in All and All in The Force',
your sense of ownership should continue.

It is strange that one abiding in The Force, intent on freedom,
should be vulnerable to lust and weakened by amorous pastimes.

It is strange that knowing lust as an enemy of knowledge,
one so weak and nearing death should still crave sensual pleasure.

It is strange that one who is unattached to the things of this world and the next,
who can discriminate between the transient and the timeless,
who yearns for freedom, should yet fear the dissolution of the body.

Whether acclaimed or tormented, the serene Jedi abides in The Force.
They are neither gratified nor angered.

A great Jedi witnesses the actions of their body as if they were another's.
How can praise or blame disturb them?

Realizing the universe is an illusion, having lost all curiosity, how can one of steady
mind fear death?

With whom can we compare the great Jedi who, content in knowing The Force, remains desireless in disappointment?

Why should a person of steady mind, who sees the nothingness of objects, prefer one thing to another?

One who is truly unattached, untouched by opposites, free of desire, will experience neither pleasure nor pain as events transpire.

4: The Glorification of Force Realisation

In which Janaka asserts that the Lord of the Universe can do as they please.

Janaka said:

Surely one who knows The Force, though they play the game of life, differs greatly from the world's bewildered and burdened beasts.

Truly the Jedi feel no elation, though they abide in the exalted state yearned for by Indra and all the discontented gods.

Surely one who knows That is not touched by virtue or vice, just as space is not touched by smoke, though it seems to be.

Who can prevent the great Jedi, who knows the universe as The Force, from living life as it comes?

Of the four kinds of beings, from The Force to a blade of grass, only the Jedi can renounce aversion and desire.

Rare is the one who knows themselves as One with no other — the Lord of the Universe.

They act as they think and are never afraid.

5: Four Ways to Dissolution

In which Ashtavakra does not disagree, but in a terse four verses points to the next step — dissolution.

Ashtavakra said:

You are immaculate, touched by nothing. What is there to renounce?
The mind is complex — let it go. Now relax.

The universe arises from you like foam from the sea.
Know yourself as One with The Force. Now relax.

Like an imagined snake in a rope, the universe appears to exist

in you, but does not. Seeing this, now relax.

You are perfect, changeless, through misery and happiness, hope and despair, life and death. Now relax.

6: The Higher Knowledge

In which Janaka says "I know that already," matching him in style and number of verses.

Janaka said:

I am infinite space; the universe is a jar.
This I know.
No need to renounce, accept or destroy.

I am a shoreless ocean; the universe makes waves.
This I know.
No need to renounce, accept or destroy.

I am mother-of-pearl; the universe is the illusion of silver.
This I know.
No need to renounce, accept or destroy.

I am in all beings; all beings are in me.
This I know.
No need to renounce, accept or destroy.

7: The Nature of Force Realisation

Unable to leave it at that , Janaka goes on to further describe his enlightened state.

Janaka said:

In me, the shoreless ocean, the ark of universe drifts here and there on the winds of its nature.
I am not impatient.

In me, the shoreless ocean, let the waves of the Universe rise and fall as they will.
I am neither enhanced nor diminished.

In me, the shoreless ocean, the universe is imagined.
I am still and formless. In The Force I abide.

The Force is not in objects, nor are objects in the pure and infinite Force.
The Force is tranquil, free of attachment and desire.
In The Force I abide.

I am Awareness in The Force. The world of drama is a passing show.

How can thoughts arise of acceptance or rejection? And where?

8: Bondage and Liberation

Still hearing too much "I" in Janaka's language, Ashtavakra instructs him in the subtleties of attachment and bondage.

Ashtavakra said:

When the mind desires or grieves things, accepts or rejects things,
is pleased or displeased by things-- this is bondage.

When the mind does not desire or grieve,
accept or reject, become pleased or displeased, liberation is at hand.

If the mind is attached to any experience, this is bondage.
When the mind is detached from all experience, this is liberation.

When there is no "I" there is only liberation.
When "I" appears bondage appears with it.
Knowing this, it is effortless to refrain from accepting and rejecting.

9: Detachment

In which Ashtavakra continues to describe the way of true detachment.

Ashtavakra said:

Opposing forces, duties done and left undone — when does it end and for whom?
Considering this, be ever desireless, let go of all things, and develop a detached
charity towards the world of drama.

Rare and blessed is one whose thirst to live, to enjoy and to know, has been
extinguished by observing the ways of humanity.

Seeing all things as threefold pain, the Jedi becomes still.
Insubstantial, transient, contemptible-- the world of drama should be transcended.

Was there an age or time humanity existed without opposites?
Leave the opposites behind. Be content with what comes.
Perfection.

The greatest Jedi agree on very little.
Seeing this, who could not be indifferent to knowledge and become still?

One who through worldly indifference, through serenity and reason, sees their true
nature and escapes illusion — are they not a true teacher?

In the myriad forms of the universe see only The Force.

You will be instantly free, and abide in The Force.

Desire creates the world of drama --renounce it. Renounce desires and you renounce the world of drama.

Now you may live as you are.

10: Quietude

In which Ashtavakra hammers away at the folly of desire – no matter how elevated or subtle.

Ashtavakra said:

Give up desire, which is the enemy.

Give up prosperity, which is born of mischief and good works.

Be indifferent.

Look upon friends, lands, wealth, houses, partners, gifts-- and all apparent good fortune-- as a passing show, as a dream lasting three to five days.

Where there is desire, there is the world of drama. Be firm in non-attachment. Be free of desire. Be content.

Bondage and desire are the same. Dissolve desire and be free.

Only by not identifying with the world of drama does one joyfully enter communion with The Force.

You are One— Awareness in The Force.

The universe is neither aware nor does it exist.

Even ignorance is unreal. What is left to know?

Attached as you have been to kingdoms, sons, partners, bodies, pleasures— life after life— you can never take them with you.

Prosperity, pleasure, pious deeds... Enough!

In the jungle of the world, the mind finds no satisfaction.

For how many lifetimes have you done hard and painful labour with body, mind and speech? It is time to stop.

11: Wisdom

In which Ashtavakra further describes the state of desirelessness to which he points.

Ashtavakra said:

Existence, non-existence, change-- this is the nature of things.

Realizing this, stillness, serenity and bliss naturally follow.

One who knows for certain that “The Force creates All and is alone” becomes still, desireless, unattached.

One who knows for certain that adversity and success come and go in obedience to destiny becomes content.
They neither desire nor grieve.

One who knows for certain that birth and death, happiness and misery, come and go in obedience to destiny sees nothing to accomplish.
They engage in effortless action, and in action remain unattached.

One who has realized that only through empathy is misery caused in the world, becomes free, happy, serene, desireless.

You said: “I am not the body, nor is the body my possession—I am Awareness in The Force.”

One who realizes this for certain has no memory of things done or left undone.
There is only The Force.

You said: “From The Force to the last blade of grass—I alone exist.”

One who knows this for certain becomes immaculate, serene, unconflicted.
Attainment has no meaning.

One who knows for certain that this manifold and wonderful universe is nothing, becomes desireless Awareness in The Force and abides in the stillness of no-thing.

12: Abiding in the The Force

In which Janaka replies by describing the state of timeless stillness in which he now finds himself.

Janaka said:

Becoming first avoidant of effortful action, then of excessive speech, then of thought itself, I come to be here.

Neither sounds nor other sense perceptions attract my attention.
Even The Force is unperceived.
The mind is free, undistracted, one-pointed.
And here I am.

Effort is required to concentrate a distracted mind superimposed with illusion.
Knowing this, I remain here.

Nothing to reject, nothing to accept.
No joy, no sorrow. By The Force, I am here.

The four stages of life, life without stages, straining meditation, renunciation, objects of mind – these are nothing but distractions. I am forever here.

Doing and not-doing both arise from ignorance.
I know this. And I am here.

Thinking of the unthinkable One unavoidably conjures thought.
I choose no-thought and remain here.

Blessed are they who grow into such understanding.
Blessed are they who understood by their nature.

13: Contentedness

In which, Janaka, having been instructed by Ashtavakra in Chapter One to “be content”, reports that he indeed is content.

Janaka said:

The tranquil state of knowing The Force alone is rare –
even among those who own but a loincloth.
I therefore neither renounce nor accept and am content.

The body is strained by practices. The tongue tires of scripture.
The mind numbs with meditation. Detached from all this,
I live as I am.

Realizing that nothing is done, I do what comes and am content.

Jedi who preach either effort or non-effort are still attached to the body. I neither dissociate nor associate with any of that and am content.

I have nothing to gain or lose by standing, walking or sitting down.
So whether I stand, walk or sit I am content.

I do not lose by sleeping nor attain by effort.
Not thinking in terms of loss or gain I am content.

Pleasure and pain fluctuate and are inconsistent.
Without the good or the bad, I am content.

14: Tranquility

In which Janaka then summarizes his exalted state with calm indifference.

Janaka said:

They who are empty minded, and who think of things only unintentionally, are freed from deliberate remembering like one awakened from a dream.

When desire has melted, how can there be wealth, or friends, or the seduction of senses? What use is scripture and knowledge?

I have realized The Force immanent in me, the Witness, the One.
I am indifferent to bondage and freedom. I have no need for liberation.

The inner condition of one who is devoid of doubt yet moves among creatures of illusion can only be known by those like them.

15: Knowledge of The Force

In which Ashtavakra relentlessly points to the vast emptiness of The Force.

Ashtavakra said:

A person of open intuition may realize The Force upon hearing a casual instruction, while a person of cluttered intellect inquires bewildered for a lifetime.

Aversion to the world's offerings is liberation. Attraction to the world's offerings is the suffering of bondage. This is the truth. Now do as you please.

This knowledge of Truth turns an eloquent, wise and active person mute, empty and inert. Lovers of the world of drama therefore shun this teaching.

You are not the body. You do not have a body. You neither do, nor enjoy.
You are Awareness in The Force --the timeless Witness. You are free.
Be content.

Attachment and aversion are attributes of the mind.
You are not the mind. You are Consciousness itself--changeless, undivided, free.
Be content.

Realize The Force in All and All in The Force. Be free of personal identity and the sense of "mine."
Be content.

You are That in which the universe appears like waves appearing in the ocean.
You are Consciousness itself. No need to worry.

Have faith, my son, have faith. You are Awareness in The Force, in union, in One.
You are the Lord of Nature.

The body is made of worldly stuff. It comes, it lingers, it goes.
The Force neither comes nor goes, yet remains.
Why mourn the body?

If the body lasts until the end of time or perishes today – is there gain or loss for you? You who are Awareness in The Force?

Let the waves of the universe rise and fall as they will.
You have nothing to gain or lose. You are the ocean.

You are the substance of Consciousness. The world is You.
Who is it that thinks they can accept or reject it?
And where do they stand?

In you who are One – immaculate, still Awareness in The Force – from where can birth, action, or a separate person arise?

Whatever you perceive is The Force and you in union with The Force.
How can bracelets, armlets and anklets, be other than the gold of which they are made?

Leave behind such distinctions as “I am The Force,” and “I am not this.”
Consider everything to be The Force. Be desireless. Be content.

Your ignorance alone creates the universe. In reality, only The Force exists.
There is no independent person or god, other than The Force.

One who knows for certain the universe is an illusion, a no-thing, becomes desireless, pure Awareness in The Force, and finds peace in the independent existence of no-thing.

In the ocean of existence only The Force is, was, and ever will be.
You are neither bound nor free.
Live in contentedness.

Do not stir the mind with “yes” or “no.”
You are pure Consciousness.
Be still, and abide in the bliss of The Force.

Give up completely all contemplation.
Hold nothing in the mind or heart.
You are The Force, forever free.
Of what use is thinking to you?

16: Special Instruction

In which Ashtavakra attacks the futility of effort and knowing.

Ashtavakra said:

You can recite and discuss scripture all you want, but until you drop everything, you will never know Truth.

You can enjoy and work and meditate, but you will still yearn for That which is beyond all experience, and in which all desires are extinguished.

Everyone is miserable because they exert constant effort.
But no one understands this. A ripe mind can become unshackled, upon hearing this one instruction.

The master idler, to whom even blinking is a bother, is content.
No one is more so.

When the mind is free of opposites like "This is done," and "This is yet undone," one becomes indifferent to merit, wealth, pleasure and liberation.

One who abhors sense objects avoids them.
One who desires them becomes ensnared.
One who neither abhors nor desires, is neither detached nor attached.

As long as there is desire-- which is the absence of discrimination-- there will be attachment and non-attachment.
This is the cause of the world.

Indulgence creates attachment. Aversion creates abstinence.
Like a child, the Jedi is free of both and thus lives like a child.

One who is attached to the world of drama thinks renouncing it will relieve their misery.
One who is attached to nothing is free and does not feel miserable, even in the worst circumstances.

They who claim liberation as their own, as an attainment of a person, are neither enlightened nor a seeker. They suffer their own misery.

Even if Shiva, Vishnu, or the lotus-born Brahma himself instruct you, until you live this way, you will never know The Force.

17: The True Knower

In which Ashtavakra describes the nature of one who is truly free.

Ashtavakra said:

One who has applied the knowledge and reaped the fruits of yoga is content, purified of attachments, and at home in solitude.

The exemplar of Truth is never miserable in the world, for the whole universe is filled with The Force alone.

As the foliage of the neem tree does not please an elephant who delights in sallaki leaves, so do sense objects not please they who delight in The Force.

Rare in the world is one who does not relish past enjoyments, nor yearn for enjoyments to come.

Those who desire pleasure and those who desire liberation are both common in the world.

Rare is the great Jedi who desires neither enjoyment nor liberation.

Rare is the right-minded person who neither covets nor shuns religion, wealth, pleasure, life or death.

The person of Knowledge neither cares for the universe nor desires its dissolution. They live happily on whatever comes their way. They are blessed.

Knowing The Force, mind empty and at peace, the Jedi lives contentedly, seeing, hearing, touching, smelling, eating.

There is no attachment or non-attachment for one in whom the ocean of drama has dried up.

Their look is vacant, senses still.

Their actions appear to have no purpose.

The Jedi is neither asleep nor awake. They neither close nor open their eyes. Thus, for the liberated soul, there is only The Force.

The liberated soul abides in The Force alone and is pure of heart. They live always and everywhere, free of desire.

Seeing, hearing, touching, smelling, eating, taking, speaking, walking, the great Jedi exerts neither effort nor non-effort. They are truly free.

The liberated soul does not blame or praise, give or take, rejoice or become angry. They are everywhere unattached and free.

The great Jedi remains poised and undisturbed, whether in the presence of a passionate partner or observing the approach of their death. They are truly free.

The Jedi sees no difference between happiness and misery, man and woman, adversity and success. Everything is seen to be the same.

In the Jedi there is neither violence nor mercy, arrogance nor humility, anxiety nor wonder. Their worldly life has relaxed.
They have transcended their role as a person.

The liberated one neither avoids experience nor craves it.
They enjoy what comes and what does not.

The Jedi is not conflicted by states of stillness and thought.
Their mind is empty.
Their home is The Force.

Though they may perform actions, the person of Knowledge
does not act. Desires extinguished, free of thoughts of "I" and "mine,"
they know with absolute certainty that nothing exists independently.

The Jedi is free. Their empty mind no longer projects delusion, dreaming, or dullness.
This state is indescribable.

18: Peace

In which, finally, Ashtavakra hits him with everything he's got – 100 verses of pure non-duality teaching. If this doesn't do it, nothing will.

Ashtavakra said:

Praise That, which is Bliss itself, which is by nature stillness and light, and by which
Its recognition reveals the world as a dream.

One may enjoy the abundant pleasures of the world, but will never be content until
giving them up.

How can one whose innermost heart has been scorched by the sun of sorrow that
comes from duty, be content until the sweet rain of torrential stillness?

The universe is but a thought in Consciousness. In reality, it is nothing.
One who sees the true nature of existence and non-existence never ceases to exist.

The Force --which is absolute, effortless, timeless, immaculate--is without limits
and at no distance from you. You are forever It.

For those whose vision becomes unclouded, illusion evaporates and The Force
becomes known. All sorrow is instantly dispelled.

Seeing everything is imagination, knowing The Force as timelessly free,
the Jedi lives like a child.

Knowing themselves as The Force, knowing existence and non-existence
to be imagination only, what is there for the desireless one to learn, say or do?

Knowing for certain that all is The Force, the Jedi has no trace of thoughts such as “I
am this” or “I am not that.”

The Jedi who finds stillness is neither distracted nor focused.
They know neither pleasure nor pain. Ignorance dispelled,
They are free of knowing.

Heaven or poverty, gain or loss, society or solitude, to the Jedi free of conditioning
there is no difference.

Religious merit, sensory pleasure, worldly prosperity, discrimination between this
and that – these have no significance to the Jedi free of opposites such as “I do this”
and “this I do not”.

The Jedi who is liberated while living has no duties in this world, no attachments in
their heart. Their life proceeds without them.

For the great Jedi who abides beyond desire, where is illusion?
Where is the universe? Where is meditation?
What even is liberation?

They who see the world of drama may try to renounce it. But what can the desireless
one do?
They see there is nothing to see.

He who has seen The Force thinks, “I am The Force.”
But they who have transcended all thought, what can they think?
They know no other than The Force.

Those who achieve self-control, see their own distraction.
But the great Jedi is not distracted. They have nothing to achieve.
They have nothing to do.

The person of Knowledge may live as an ordinary individual, but they are not. They
see they are neither focused nor distracted and in them, no fault can be found.

They who are beyond existence and non-existence-- who are wise, satisfied, free of
desire--do nothing, though the world may see them in motion.

The wise one is not troubled by action or inactivity. They live happily,
doing whatever gets done.

Like a leaf in the wind, the liberated one is untethered from life-- desireless, independent, free.

For one who has transcended the world there is no joy or sorrow.
With a stilled mind, they live on with no body.

One who knows The Force, whose mind is serene and spotless,
does not desire to give up anything, nor do they miss what is not there.

Their mind being in a natural state of emptiness, the wise one knows nothing of honour and dishonour. They do what comes to pass.

One who acts knowing "This is done by The Force, not by me, or my body," indeed does nothing-- no matter how much action occurs.

The liberated one acts without claiming to be acting, but they are not foolish. They are blessed and happy even in the world of drama.

Having had enough of the endless workings of the mind, the wise one comes to rest. They neither think, nor know, nor hear, nor see.

Beyond stillness, beyond distraction, the great Jedi thinks nothing of liberation or bondage. Having seen the universe is void-- even though it seems to exist-- They are The Force.

They who believe they are a person is constantly acting, even when the body is at rest.

The Jedi knows they are not a person, and therefore does nothing, even when the body is in motion.

The mind of the liberated one is neither troubled nor pleased.
It is actionless, motionless, desireless and free of doubt.

The liberated one does not exert effort to meditate or act.
Action and meditation just happen.

On hearing the ultimate Truth, the dull-witted person is bewildered.
The wise person on hearing the ultimate Truth retreats within and appears dull-witted.

The ignorant practice meditation and attempt no-thought.
The wise, like people in deep sleep, actually do nothing.

The ignorant person finds no peace either by effort or non-effort.
The wise person by The Force alone is stilled.

Though they are by nature The Force, pure intelligence, love and perfection;
though they transcend the universe and are clearness itself, people of the world will
not see this through attempted meditation and esoteric practices.

The ignorant person will never be liberated by their repetitious practices.
Blessed are they who by simple understanding enter timeless freedom.

Because they desire to know The Force, the ignorant person can never become That.
The wise person becomes The Force because they are free of desire and know
nothing.

Unable to stand steady and eager for salvation, the ignorant perpetuate the illusion
of world. Seeing the world of drama as the source of all misery, the wise cut it off at
the root.

The fool thinks peace comes by controlling the mind.
They will never attain it. The wise one knows the truth of The Force , and is stillness
itself.

For those who think knowledge is things and ideas, how can there be Force
knowledge?
The wise do not see separate things – they see only the timeless Force.

The fool tries to control the mind with the mind – what folly!
The wise one delights in The Force alone. There is no mind to master.

Some believe in existence; others believe nothing exists.
Rare is the one who believes nothing and is never confused.

Weak intellectuals may believe The Force is One without other.
But being mired in illusion they do not actually know The Force,
so live out their lives in misery.

The mind of one seeking liberation depends on things for perception.
The mind of the liberated one perceives no-thing and is free of desire.

Timid people fear sensory experience as much as they do tigers.
They seek refuge in caves and try to un-think the world.

Sensory experiences are like elephants who, upon encountering a desireless person,
see them as a lion. They immediately turn on their heels, or if unable to escape,
stay on to flatter and serve them.

A person with no doubts, who knows only The Force, has no need of practice or
liberation.
Seeing, hearing, touching, smelling, eating – they live as they are, contentedly.

One whose mind is emptied and unconflicted by The Force sees nothing to do, nothing to avoid, nothing to warrant their indifference.

The Jedi does whatever appears to be done, without thinking of good or bad. Their actions are like those of a child.

Depending on nothing, one finds contentedness.
Depending on nothing, one attains the Supreme.
Depending on nothing, one passes through tranquility, to The Force.

When one realizes they are neither the actor nor the one who watches, the mind-storm is stilled.

The actions of the Jedi, free of pretence and motive, shine like a clear light. Not so those of the deluded seeker who affects a peaceful demeanour, while remaining firmly attached.

Unbounded, unfettered, untethered from the projections of mind, the Jedi are free to play and enjoy, or retire to mountain caves.

Whether honouring a spiritual scholar, a god, or holy shrine; whether seeing a desirable mate, a king, or beloved friend--the heart of the Jedi is unmoved.

Though their partners, servants, sons, daughters, grandchildren and all their relatives ridicule and despise them, the Jedi is undismayed.

Though pleased they are not pleased; though pained they do not suffer. This wonderful state is understood only by those like them.

The belief in duty creates a relative world for its performance.
The wise know themselves to be formless, timeless, all-pervasive, immaculate, and thus transcend duty and world.

Even doing nothing, the dull one is anxious and distracted.
Even amidst great action, the Jedi remain still.

Even in practical life, the wise one remains content. Content to sit, content to sleep, content to move about, content to speak, content to eat...

Because they know The Force, the Jedi are not disrupted by practical life. They are deep and still, like a vast lake. They are not like regular people. Their sorrows have vanished.

For the deluded one, even rest is an activity.
For the Jedi, even action bears the fruit of stillness.

The deluded one is often averse to the contents of their life.
To the Jedi with no thought for body, attachment and aversion have no meaning.

The deluded mind is caught up in thinking and not thinking.
Though the mind of the Jedi may encounter thoughts as they arise, they let them pass unhindered.

The Jedi sees nothing being done even when they seem busy.
Like a child, they are pure and act without reason.

Blessed indeed is the Jedi who knows The Force. Though seeing, hearing, touching, smelling, eating, they never desire nor change.

For one who is void and changeless, where is the world and its imaginings?
Where is the end? Where is the possibility of it?

Glorious indeed is the Jedi who, free of desire, embodies Bliss itself. They have become absorbed in The Force.

In short, the great Jedi realizes The Force and is free of desire, enjoyment and liberation.
In all of space and time they are attached to nothing.

What remains for One who is Consciousness itself, who sees the non-existence of a phenomenal world created by the mere thought of a name?

Peace is natural for one who knows for certain that nothing exists, who sees appearances are illusory, and to whom the inexpressible is apparent.

Rules of conduct, detachment, renunciation, asceticism — what are these to one who sees the unreality of things, who is the Light of Awareness in The Force?

How can there be joy or sorrow, bondage or liberation, for one who perceives non-existence and lights the infinite?

Until Force realisation, illusion prevails.
The Jedi lives without thoughts of “I” or “mine.”
Their connection to illusion is severed.

What is knowledge? What is the universe?
What are thoughts like “I am the body,” or “the body is mine”?
The Jedi is imperishable and sorrowless.
They are The Force.

When a weak person gives up meditation, they fall prey to whims and desires.

Even on hearing Truth, the person of dull intellect holds on to illusion.
Through effort and suppression, they may appear outwardly composed,
but inside they crave the world of drama.

Though others may see them working, the Jedi does nothing.
Knowledge has banished effort. They find no reason to do or say.

The Jedi is fearless, unassailable No darkness, no light, nothing to lose.
Nothing.

Patience, discrimination, even fearlessness – What use are these to the Jedi?
Their nature cannot be described. They are not people, as commonly understood.

No heaven, no hell, no liberation.
In short, Consciousness is Void. What more can be said?

The Jedi neither yearns for fulfilment nor frets over non-attainment.
Their mind is cool and brimming with sweetness.

Detached from desire, the Jedi neither praises peace nor blames the wicked.
Equally content in happiness and misery, they would not desire to change a thing.

The Jedi neither rejects the world of drama nor desires The Force.
They are free of joy and sorrow.
They do not live and cannot die.

The wise one lives without hope.
They have no special attachment to their children, partner, or anyone.
Pleasure means nothing to them. Their life is glorious.

The Jedi wanders about as they please and lives on whatever may come.
Contentment ever dwells in their heart. And when the sun sets, they rest where they
are.

Rooted in Being, no thought of being born or reborn, the great Jedi is indifferent to
the death or birth of their body.

The wise one stands alone, caring for nothing, bereft of possessions.
They go where they will, unhindered by opposites, and their doubts rent asunder.
They are truly blessed.

The wise one has no sense of “mine.” To them, earth, stone and gold are the same.
The knots of their heart have unravelled. They know neither ignorance nor sorrow.
They are excellent in every way.

The liberated Jedi has no desire in their heart.
They are content and indifferent. They have no equal.

Only one free of desire knows nothing of knowing,
says nothing needs saying, sees nothing to see.

They who are without desire excel, be they beggar or king.
They no longer see good or bad.

What is lust or restraint, or the desire for Truth to the Jedi who has reached life's
goal, and who embodies virtue and sincerity?

The inner experience of one who is free of desire and suffering, who is content and
reposes in The Force-- how can it be described, and to whom?

The wise one's state never varies. Sleeping soundly, they are not asleep.
Lying in reverie, they are not dreaming. Eyes open, they are not wakeful.

The person of Knowledge seems to think, but has no thoughts.
They seem to have sense perceptions, but do not experience.
They seem to have intelligence, but are empty-minded.
They appear to be a person, but are not.

The person of Knowledge is neither happy nor miserable,
neither detached nor attached, neither liberated nor seeking liberation.
They are neither this nor that.

Even while distracted the blessed one is still.
In meditation, they do not meditate. In ignorance, they remain clear.
Though learned, they know nothing.

The liberated one, who abides unconditionally in The Force, who is free of the
concept of action and duty, who is always and everywhere the same, is desireless.
They do not worry about what they did or did not do.

The wise one is neither pleased by praise nor annoyed by blame.
They neither rejoice in life, nor fear death.

One of a tranquil mind seeks neither crowds nor wilderness.
They are the same wherever they go.

19: Repose in the The Force

It works! Janaka no longer describes his enlightened state, but can speak only in questions revealing absence.

Janaka said:

With the tongs of Truth you have plucked the thorn of thinking from the innermost cave of my heart.

Where is meditation, pleasure, prosperity or discrimination?
Where is duality? Where even is Unity?
We abide in the glory of The Force.

Where is past and future, or even present?
Where is space, or even eternity?
We abide in the glory of The Force.

Where is Self? Where is not-Self?
Where is good and evil, confusion and clarity?
We abide in the glory of The Force.

Where is sleeping, dreaming, waking, or even the fourth state?
Where is fear?
We abide in the glory of The Force.

Where is close or far, in or out, gross or subtle?
We abide in the glory of The Force.

Where is life and death? Where is the world and worldly relations?
Where is distraction and stillness?
We abide in the glory of The Force.

There is no need to talk about the three ends of life.
To talk of practice is purposeless.
Even talking about Truth is irrelevant.
We rest in The Force alone.

20: Liberation-in-Life

*In a final flurry of questions pointing only at their own meaninglessness, Janaka burns off the last vestiges of personhood and enters dissolution. He ends with: "No more can be said."
Ashtavakra smiles, nods approvingly, and says no more.*

Janaka said:

Where are the elements, the body, the organs, the mind?
Where is the void? Where is despair?
Our nature is transparent clearness.

Where is scripture? Where is Force knowledge? Where is no-mind?
Where is contentment and freedom from desire?
We are empty of two-ness.

Where is Knowledge and ignorance? Where is "I"?
Where is "this"? Where is "mine"?
Where is bondage and liberation? The Force has no attributes.

Where is the unfolding of karma? Where is liberation-in-life,
or even liberation at death?
There is only The Force.

Where is the doer or enjoyer? Where is the origin or end of thought?
Where is direct or reflected knowledge? There is no person here.

Where is the world? Where is the seeker of liberation?
Where is the contemplative? Where is the man of Knowledge?
Where is the soul in bondage? Where is the liberated soul?
Our nature is The Force.

Where are creation and destruction? Where is the end and the means?
Where is the seeker? Where is attainment?
We are One with The Force.

Where is the knower? Where is knowing? Where is the known, or knowledge itself?
Where is anything? Where is nothing?
We are pure awareness in The Force.

Where is distraction, concentration, knowledge or delusion?
Where is joy or sorrow?
We are stillness in The Force.

Where is the relative? Where is the transcendent? Where is happiness or misery?
We are empty of thought.

Where is illusion? Where is existence? Where is attachment or non-attachment?
Where is a person? Where is God?
We are awareness in The Force.

Where is activity or inactivity? Where is liberation or bondage?
We are timeless, indivisible.
We are The Force.

Where are principles and scriptures? Where is the disciple or teacher?
Where is the reason for life? We are boundless, Absolute in The Force.

Where is existence or non-existence? Where is Unity or duality?
Nothing emanates from us. No more can be said.